

2004 CPG

COMPREHENSIVE
PROCUREMENT
GUIDELINES

Buy-Recycled Series

LANDSCAPING PRODUCTS

LANDSCAPING



Buying recycled products...

- ...conserves natural resources
- ...saves energy
- ...reduces solid waste
- ...reduces air and water pollutants
- ...reduces greenhouse gases
- ...creates new jobs

It might be easier than you think to turn garbage into gardens!

Whether you're a park manager, professional landscaper, or tend a small garden bed, you'll find recycled-content products offer a quick, effective, and affordable way to make your grounds green.

To make it easier to buy recycled, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) updates the Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines (CPG) every 2 years.

Through the CPG, EPA designates items that must contain recycled materials when purchased with appropriated federal funds by federal, state, and local agencies, or by government contractors. Several landscaping products are among these items. EPA's research shows that the items designated in the CPG are of high quality, widely available, and cost-competitive with virgin products. EPA

also issues nonregulatory companion guidance—the Recovered Materials Advisory Notice (RMAN)—that recommends levels of recycled content for these items.

Why Buy Recycled?

Recycling is more than just dropping off your cans, bottles, and newspapers at the curb or at a local collection facility. Diverting recyclables from the waste stream is only the first of three steps in the recycling process. The second step occurs when companies use these recyclables to manufacture new products. The third step comes when you purchase products made from recovered materials. That's how we close the loop.

Buying recycled products results in many environmental benefits. It supports local recycling programs by creating markets for the collected materials that are processed and used to manufacture new products. This creates jobs and helps strengthen the economy; conserves natural resources; saves energy; and reduces solid waste, air and water pollutants, and greenhouse gases that contribute to global warming.



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What is CPG?

The Resource Conservation and Recovery Act requires procuring agencies to buy recycled-content products designated by EPA in the CPG. Issued in May 1995, the first CPG designated 19 new products (including hydraulic mulch) and incorporated five previously designated items in eight product categories. The first CPG update (CPG II) was published in November 1997 and designated an additional 12 items, including garden and soaker hoses, as well as lawn and garden edging. A second CPG update (CPG III) was published in January 2000 and designated an additional 18 items, including food waste compost and plastic lumber landscaping timbers and posts. The third CPG update (CPG IV), published in April 2004, designated seven new products but no additional landscaping products.

Procuring agencies include all federal agencies, and any state or local government agencies or government contractors that use appropriated federal funds to purchase the designated items. If your agency spends more than \$10,000 per year on a product designated in the CPG, you are required to purchase it with the highest recycled-content level practicable. The CPG also applies to lease contracts covering designated items. Executive Order 13101 and the Federal Acquisition Regulation also call for an increase in the federal government's use of recycled-content and environmentally prefer-

able products.

Once any new items are designated in a published CPG update, an agency has 1 year to develop an affirmative procurement program (or revise an existing one) to include these new items. In previous years, agencies have had to revise their affirmative procurement programs to incorporate items such as hydraulic mulch, compost, garden and soaker hoses, lawn and garden edging, and plastic lumber landscaping timbers and posts. Since CPG IV does not designate any additional landscaping products, agencies are not required to revise the landscaping products portion of their affirmative procurement programs.

The CPG acknowledges that specific circumstances might arise that preclude the purchase of products made with recovered materials. Your agency may purchase designated items that do not contain recovered materials if it determines that: 1) the price of a given designated item made with recovered materials is unreasonably high, 2) there is inadequate competition (not enough sources of supply), 3) unusual and unreasonable delays would result from obtaining the item, or 4) the recycled-content item does not meet the agency's reasonable performance specifications.



How Do I Purchase Recycled Content Landscaping Products?

The EPA issues guidance in RMANs, which are designed to make it as easy as possible to buy the designated items. The RMANs recommend recycled-content levels to look for when purchasing landscaping products, as shown in the chart below. Following the RMANs' recommended levels will help ensure your affirmative procurement program and standards meet the buy-recycled requirements. The RMANs also provide other purchasing guidance. Please refer to www.epa.gov/cpg/products.htm for more information on individual products.

Rather than specifying just one level of recycled content, the RMANs recommend ranges that reflect actual market conditions. The recommendations are based on market research identifying recycled-content products that are commercially available, are competitively priced, and meet buyers' quality standards.

Access EPA's online recycled-content products database by going to www.epa.gov/cpg and selecting "Supplier Database." See the last section of this fact sheet for other helpful resources.

EPA's Recommended Content Levels for Landscaping Products

LANDSCAPING PRODUCT ¹	MATERIAL RECOVERED	POSTCONSUMER RECOVERED CONTENT	TOTAL RECOVERED CONTENT
Hydraulic Mulch	Paper	100%	—
	Wood/Paper	—	100%
Compost	Yard Trimmings and/or Food Waste	See Endnote 2	See Endnote 2
Garden Hose	Rubber and/or Plastic	60-65%	—
Soaker Hose	Rubber and/or Plastic	60-70%	—
Lawn and Garden Edging	Rubber and/or Plastic	30-100%	30-100%
Landscaping Timbers and Posts	HDPE	25-50%	75-100%
	Mixed Plastic/Sawdust	50%	100%
	HDPE/Fiberglass	75%	95%
	Other Mixed Resins	50-100%	95-100%

¹ EPA's recommendations do not preclude procuring agencies from purchasing landscaping products manufactured using other materials. EPA simply recommends that procuring agencies, when purchasing landscaping products designated in the procurement guidelines, purchase these products containing recovered materials.

² Purchase or use compost made from yard trimmings, leaves, grass clippings, and/or food wastes for applications such as landscaping, seeding of grass or other plants, as nutritious mulch under trees and shrubs, and in erosion control and soil reclamation. EPA further recommends implementing a composting system for these materials when agencies have an adequate volume and sufficient space.



Planting the Seeds: Hydraulic Mulch

You might be establishing wildflowers along an interstate or replanting grass on a public golf course. In either case, your first step is to plant the seeds. Hydraulic mulch is a quick, proven, and affordable way to help get the job done. Utilizing recovered newspaper and wood products, hydraulic mulch is commonly used in highway construction projects to grow grass along embankments, medians, and roadways. It also is used in recreational areas and on residential lawns. Through hydroseeding, a mixture of water, seeds, and hydraulic mulch is sprayed over soil. The mulch stabilizes the soil, prevents wind and water erosion, and provides protection and warmth for the seeds, helping them grow.

Be sure you require that contractors use hydraulic mulch for all your hydroseeding projects, where appropriate. Hydraulic mulch not only protects young seeds from the elements; it also strengthens demand for wood waste and the newspaper you recycle in your local recycling program.

Strengthening the Soil: Yard Trimmings and Food Waste Compost

Used frequently in both commercial and residential landscaping, yard trimmings and food waste compost turns the organic waste we might otherwise throw away—such as grass, leaves, twigs, and fruit and vegetable trimmings—into an effective soil amendment. Compost returns nutrients to the soil, improves soil texture, and promotes new plant growth. Additionally, compost can suppress some plant diseases and prevent soil erosion when used as cover for seeded grass.

With an increase in the number of composting facilities from 651 in 1988 to 3,800 in 2000, the market is clearly growing for this valuable product. Even so, more yard trimmings and food waste could still be composted. In 2000, these valuable organic materials constituted more than 23 percent of our national waste stream, with 53.6 million tons generated, of which only about 30 percent of that amount (16.5 million tons) was recovered for composting.

Quenching Mother Nature's Thirst: Garden and Soaker Hoses

Once your seeds are planted and the soil is enhanced with nutrient-rich compost, nothing is more important than adequate watering. The questions of how much and how often to water are a matter of local climactic conditions, but one thing is clear—buying recycled-content garden and soaker hoses is the ideal choice for watering your garden or planted areas. Not only will these hoses deliver water to meet your garden's needs, they also help create new uses for old tires and recycled plastics from items such as discarded cable wires and old traffic cones.

Building a Home for the Garden: Landscaping Timbers and Posts (Plastic Lumber)

To create attractive and effective landscaping, you'll need some construction skills as well as a green thumb. Raised beds, for example, will frame and protect flower beds. Framed walkways, bordered lawns, and flower beds all enhance the appearance of a landscape. Likewise, retaining walls can control erosion. Whether you're beautifying a park, highway, housing development, zoo, or the exterior of an office building, you can do it with recycled-content landscaping timbers and posts. The National Park Service is leading the way with more than a dozen projects using timbers and posts manufactured with plastic or composite lumber, which give new life to recovered wood and plastic materials such as milk jugs and plastic bags.

The Border Line: Lawn and Garden Edging

When you're ready to finish the job, recycled-content lawn and garden edging provides the perfect barrier for delineating your beds. Sold in both industrial and residential strengths, these quality products help keep grass and weeds out of flower and vegetable beds, saving time and money. You can purchase up to 100 percent postconsumer recycled-content edging, which is made from scrap rubber, milk jugs, and other plastic containers.



How Can I Get More Information?



Information Available From EPA

This fact sheet and the following publications on buying recycled-content products can be accessed on the Internet.

- **EPA Amends Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines (CPG).** This fact sheet provides general information about the CPG and the development of affirmative procurement programs. See www.epa.gov/cpg/pdf/cpg-fs.pdf.
- **Federal Register (FR)** notices promulgating CPG I (60 FR 21370/EPA530-Z-95-006) and RMAN I (60 FR 21386/EPA530-Z-95-007), May 1, 1995. FR notices promulgating CPG II (62 FR 60961/EPA530-Z-97-009) and RMAN II (62 FR 60975/EPA530-Z-97-010), November 13, 1997. FR notices promulgating CPG III (65 FR 3070) and RMAN III (65 FR 3082), January 19, 2000. FR notices promulgating CPG IV (69 FR 24028) and RMAN IV (69 FR 24039), April 30, 2004. See www.epa.gov/cpg/backgrnd.htm.
- Composting Publications, including the following compost fact sheets, are available from EPA at www.epa.gov/compost:
 - Innovative Uses of Compost—Bioremediation and Pollution Prevention (EPA530-F-97-042).
 - Innovative Uses of Compost—Erosion Control, Turf Remediation, and Landscaping (EPA530-F-97-043).
 - Innovative Uses of Compost—Disease Control for Plants and Animals (EPA530-F-97-044).
 - Innovative Uses of Compost—Composting of Soils Contaminated by Explosives (EPA530-F-97-045).
 - Innovative Uses of Compost—Reforestation, Wetlands Restoration, and Habitat Revitalization (EPA530-F-97-046).

Other Sources of Information

- **Buy Recycled Business Alliance.** The Alliance includes over 3,200 companies and organizations committed to increasing their use of recycled-content products and materials in their day-to-day operations. The Alliance offers educational materials, a quarterly newsletter, and product-specific guides. Public purchasing entities can join for free. For more information, contact the National Recycling Coalition, 1325 G Street NW Suite 1025, Washington, DC 20005-3104. Phone: 202 347-0450. Fax: 202 347-0449. Web site: www.nrc-recycle.org/brba/index.htm E-mail: brbainfo@nrc-recycle.org.
- **U.S. Composting Council.** The United States Composting Council offers educational materials and workshops on composting and seeks to develop standards for compost. For more information, contact the U.S. Composting Council, 200 Parkway Drive South, Hauppauge, NY 11788. Phone: 631 864-2567. Fax: 631 864-3796. Email: admin@compostingcouncil.org. Web site: www.compostingcouncil.org.
- **U.S. General Services Administration (GSA).** GSA publishes various supply catalogs, guides, and schedules for recycled-content products available through the Federal Supply Service. For copies of the following document and other information, contact GSA, Centralized Mailing List Service (7CAFL), 4900 Hemphill Street, P.O. Box 6477, Fort Worth, TX 76115-9939. Phone: 817 334-5215. Fax: 817 334-5527. You can also access GSA Advantage!, GSA's Internet-based online ordering system, to order any GSA product at www.gsaadvantage.gov.
 - **Environmental Products Guide.** This guide is designed to help procurement officials identify environmentally preferable products and services. It contains nearly 3,000 items, including many recycled-content products. An electronic version can be viewed at www.gsa.gov/attachments/GSA_PUBLICATIONS/pub/epsg2002_3_1.pdf.



- **Green Seal.** Green Seal is a national nonprofit labeling organization that sets environmental standards, including those for garden hoses, and awards a Green Seal of Approval to products meeting those standards. For more information, contact Green Seal at 1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW., Suite 827, Washington, DC 20036. Phone: 202 872-6400. Fax: 202 872-4324. Web site: <www.greenseal.org>.
- **Greening the Government: A Guide to Implementing Executive Order 13101.** This guide provides detailed information on the requirements of Executive Order 13101 and the benefits of achieving compliance. Updated in February 2001, it is available from the Office of the Federal Environmental Executive. Phone: 202 564-1297. Fax: 202 564-1393. Web site: <www.ofee.gov>. Email: task_force@ofee.gov. An electronic version of the document can be accessed at <www.ofee.gov/eo/greening.pdf>.
- **Official Recycled Products Guide.** This directory lists more than 5,000 manufacturers and distributors of recycled-content products. Contact: Recycling Data Management Corporation, P.O. Box 577, Ogdensburg, NY 13669. Phone: 800 267-0707. Fax: 877 471-3258.
- **Recycled Plastic Products Source Book.** This booklet lists more than 1,400 plastic products from approximately 300 manufacturers. For more information, contact the American Plastics Council (APC), 1300 Wilson Blvd., 13th Floor, Arlington, VA 22209. Phone: 800 2-HELP-90. Outside of U.S.: 703 253-0710. Web site: <www.americanplasticscouncil.org>.



Internet Sites—Product Information

- **Recycling Data Network Information Services:** <www.recyclingdata.com/contents.htm>. This commercial Web site provides access, on a subscription basis, to a recycled-content products database of over 4,500 listings in 700 product classifications. It also provides a reference library and a newsletter. Managed by the publisher of the Official Recycled Products Guide, the product database is considered to be the largest of its kind.

Internet Sites—Government

- **The Comprehensive Procurement Guidelines:** <www.epa.gov/cpg>. This site describes EPA's effort to facilitate the procurement of products containing recovered materials, including information on CPG, RMANs, and an interactive database of manufacturers and suppliers of designated items.
- **Environmentally Preferable Purchasing (EPP):** <www.epa.gov/epp>. EPA's EPP program encourages and assists federal agencies in purchasing environmentally preferable products and services. The site explains EPA's guiding principles for including environmental performance in purchasing decision-making, and posts case studies of successful pilot projects in both the public and private sectors.
- **Federal Trade Commission:** <www.ftc.gov/bcp/grnrule/guides980427.htm>. The Federal Trade Commission issued Guides for the Use of Environmental Marketing Claims in May 1998.
- **Jobs Through Recycling:** <www.epa.gov/jtr>. EPA's Jobs Through Recycling program stimulates economic growth and recycling market development by assisting businesses and supporting a network of state and regional recycling contacts. This Web site provides information on financing and technical assistance for recycling businesses as well as other market development tools.
- **California Recycled-Content Product Database:** <www.ciwmb.ca.gov/RCP>. This site contains information on why to buy recycled-content products,



how to procure them, and provides access to a database with information on products, as well as manufacturers, distributors, reprocessors, mills, and convertors across the country who procure or produce these products.

■ **King County Recycled Product Procurement**

Program: <www.metrokc.gov/procure/green/index.html>. This site describes the tools and techniques developed by King County, Washington, agencies for purchasing recycled products.

■ **Municipal Solid Waste:** <www.epa.gov/msw>. This site includes information on recycling, source reduction, and reuse. Contains state municipal solid waste data and the latest facts and figures on waste generation and disposal.

■ **WasteWise:** <www.epa.gov/wastewise>. WasteWise is a free, voluntary EPA program through which organizations eliminate costly municipal solid waste, benefitting their bottom line and the environment. The program provides hands-on assistance to members to help them purchase or manufacture recycled-content products, prevent waste, and recycle solid waste materials.

